651 the hands of the feudal landlords, mostly in produce, though the new Education Tax is paid in cash. The sales tax on horses, mules, donkeys and cattle, collected at the big markets by the old "nägadras" is now supposed to be accumulated at the "gemja bet" of the provincial capital, to be forwarded to Addis Ababa once every month, sometimes after deduction of expenses incurred locally by the central government. The same procedure is followed with income taxes, which, in a provincial capital such as Gondar, are stated officially as averaging Eth$1.50 per taxpayer per year.

651 441 [494] The highest local income tax is paid by the local branch of the widespread trading company of Besse Co., which has a monopoly on gasoline sales, and does trucking, imports and exports from the provinces, and which pays Eth$750.-per annum in Gondar, a very small percentage of its actual income. The next-highest local taxpayer is Navigatana Co, formerly of Italian origin, which controls the diesel boats which monopolize modern traffic across Lake Tana. The third-highest local taxpayer is an Arab wholesale merchant, who operates at irregular intervals in import, export, and trucking, westward to the Sudan and eastward to Eritrea, on the Italian-built roads.

[505]

[494]

651 But in the strictly rural, agricultural environment, tributes and taxes are still measured per "madiga" (lit. potful) of tyeff grain, received by the feudal landlord ("balbat") or landowning local church. The amounts are loosely determined by local custom and tre-

557 household both in rural areas or towns, also to do
565 plowing for the freehold farmer and help in the harvest. Servants are usually permanently employed, and therefore do not usually leave even if the employer is behind in his monthly wage payments. Salary and food are received with a bow and cupped hands. The servant addresses the master with the extra polite "gētoch" (lit. masters, i.e. plural), walks in front of the master's mule to make way, slightly behind him when both are on foot, and never lets his master carry anything.

Long interpersonal relations usually improve the position of the servant to master, and it is not in the servant's interest to change jobs, or to go to another area where he is unknown. A landless "gabbar" may try to attach himself to a well-to-do household as "retainer ("zēga"), without wages, doing a servant's work in the hope of occasional, seasonal gifts, a share of the produce, or, in town, a share in trade. For, a servant or retainer who is Amhara "attentam" and Coptic Christian becomes like a member of the extended family. The proverb says:

[539] "When (women) grind (grain) together,
there is no mistress".

556 Economic wealth enables each of these social
565 classes to achieve some upward social nobility, within limits. But there are not many opportunities to accumulate much wealth. Traders can raise their status
[441] in towns, despite doubtful ancestry. The same is true
294 of tailors, a very recent occupation in town, where
565 foot-operated Singer sewing machines have enabled men

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

cation. Since the mechanism of stratification ranks all the members of a society according to the value placed on their qualities and performances by that society, the stratification system of a society is its most inclusive framework of social order. Here too, however, conflicting value orientations are embodied in more or less distinct status hierarchies, and it is no longer possible to find status evaluations which are shared throughout the society. It is in the composition and relations of the elites that the value conflicts in Ethiopia today are most explicit, and in their mutual adjustments that the movement toward new forms of integration is most likely to be manifest.

The traditional infrastructure of Abyssinian society was itself relatively stratified. Highest in status were the landowning peasants, the older and wealthier of whom merged imperceptibly into the lower stratum of the nobility. Next in order were the peasants of various situations who did not own land: sons waiting to inherit land from their parents, tenants paying rents in kind to some landlord, and agricultural laborers attached as retainers on the estates of wealthy peasants, nobles, or churches. Below them were the statuses of Abyssinians who led a more mobile sort of existence, such as weavers, minstrels, common soldiers, and beggars.

The trading class was broadly divided into two ranks, that of the merchant (*naggādē*) whose caravans brought goods from afar, and that of the small-scale peddler (*shaqātch*). The wealthier Abyssinian merchant was accorded very high status, comparable at times to that of the nobility. If an Arab, Armenian, or Muslim Abyssinian, however, his status would be tainted by that disesteem felt for all outside the ethnic pale. The peddlers as a class were in a low status, comparable to that of the weavers and minstrels. Below these were metalsmiths, potters, and tanners, who were sometimes low caste Abyssinian artisans, sometimes Falasha or Gurage tribesmen. Lowest in status were the slaves, captured in wars or raiding expeditions from the Negroid tribes in the west (Shanqalla) and north (Baria and Kunama), and from the Kaffa and other Cushitic groups in the south. Freed for a generation now, such people still work as household servants and retainers, or as laborers in the towns.

Such were the classes which performed the drudgery. They produced sufficient surplus to sustain a fairly extensive, if not opulent, leisure class, which ministered to the more general political and cultural needs of the society. The feudal nobility and the clergy represented the paramount values of warfare and religion and shared responsibility for the maintenance of legal order. Together with the emperor, to whom they were normally subordinate, they commanded the resources and respect of the Abyssinian people and set standards for their behavior.

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

*793 621 869 241 as a means for dicusing and strengthening a risteña family's economic and social interests within the parish. There are two conspicuous exceptions. Should a boy bear [732] a physical disability so severe that he will be unable to perform the basic subsistence activities of Amhara men, particularly plowing, he may be enrolled in the parish school as a prelude to a non-agricultural career beyond his natal parish. The alternatives are few. [463] work as an artisan is appropriate for Muslim and Falasha, [441] but shameful for an Amhara; while employment as a mer- [563] chant is less objectionable, the peasant is generally without the necessary skills, contacts, and capital; military service is beyond his abilities; thus, only the Church and government remain. Regarding the Church, the priesthood is closed to him, since a priest must be physically whole, and capable of standing unassisted during [647] the performance of the Mass. The remaining ecclesiastical and government career choices assume that a boy will achieve literacy at the parish school and subsequently *793 621 869 depart from his natal community. The second exception to the local focus of the parish school, is the small 593 number of boys who are offspring of debtera-teachers serving in parish churches. The ties of these men to their parishes-of-residence are usually only professional, and they are rarely risteñas, it is moreover their professional ethos which influences them to seek an extensive

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

• 441 The Alternative Career Paths. In choosing between
[869] material and professional interests, some men forsake
*[793] their erstwhile ecclesiastical goals altogether, to apply in secular occupations (particularly as scribes and merchants) the skills that they have acquired or perfected during their student days. Exemplary among these is the kibe (butter) merchant. Occasionally, profits accumulated by gathering and begging are invested in the purchase of lowland butter and the means for transporting it to highland markets. Profits earned from kibe trading are sometimes sufficient to promise a standard of living which exceeds that of the peasants with whom the student trades. The student who yields to the temptations of a full-time trading career generally establishes an annual cycle in which a portion of his kibe profits are reinvested in livestock for subsequent sale at regional markets.

*793 A second category of students reverses these priori-
869 ties, and disregards non-ecclesiastical goals altogether.
433 Such students believe that, for themselves, it is faith in the Almighty which must sustain them in their travail. Thus, even excursions into the lowlands are replaced by exclusively ecclesiastical activities. Subsistence needs are met by copying Church books for resale, participating in the Mass in return for a portion of the grain tithes given to the church, and dining at baptisms and annual memorial feasts (fehitat). In